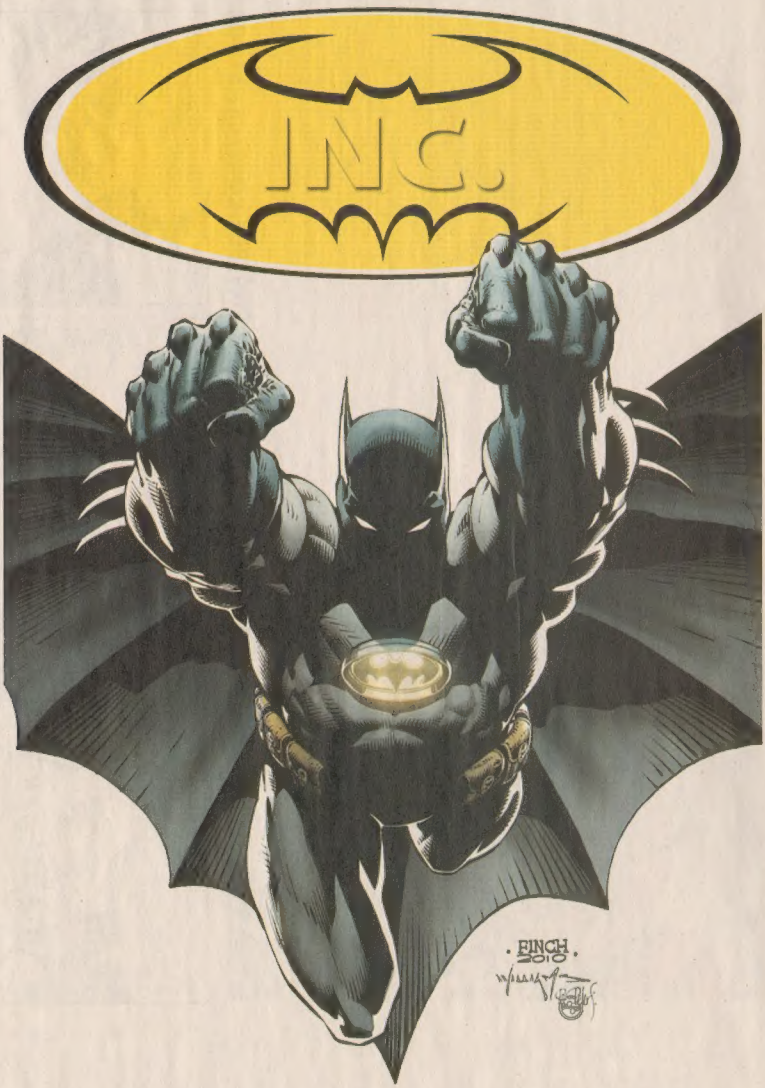
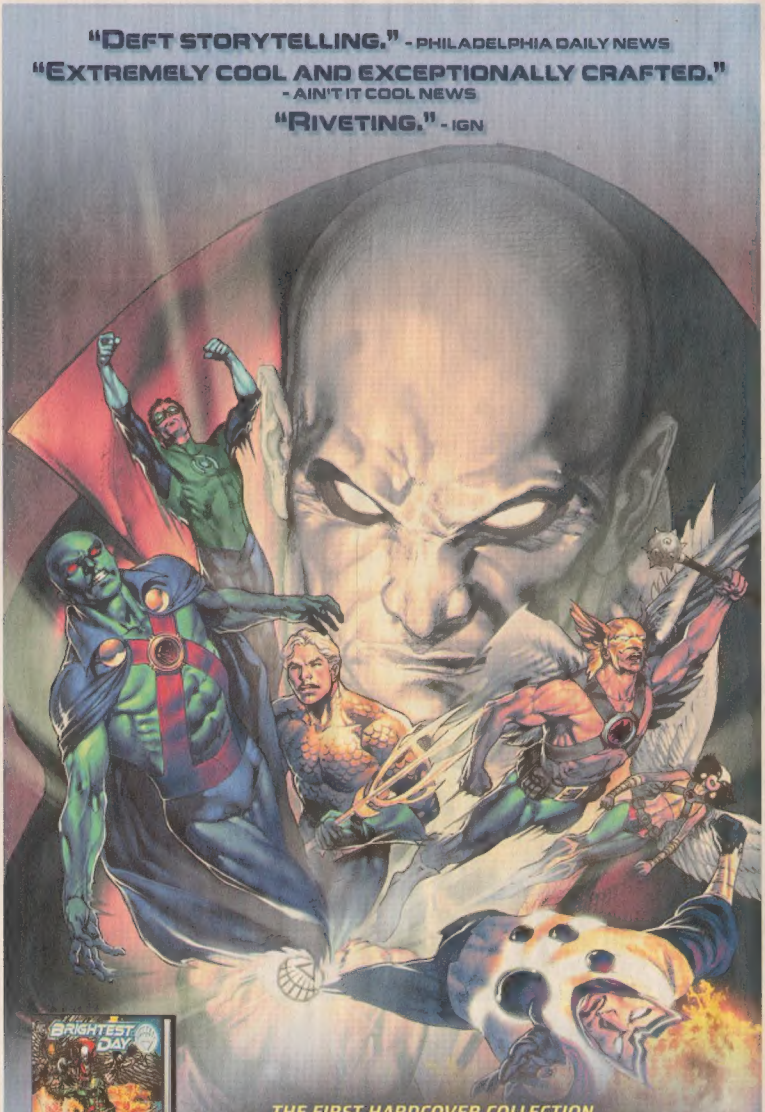


COMIC SHOP NEWS

"DEFT STORYTELLING." - PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

"EXTREMELY COOL AND EXCEPTIONALLY CRAFTED." - AIN'T IT COOL NEWS

"RIVETING." - IGN



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Wayne's World

—For more than a year, Bruce Wayne was absent from the DC Universe... but he's back now, in a more prominent role than ever before—both as the Dark Knight and as Bruce Wayne, billionaire hero financier.

And thanks to writer *Grant Morrison*, Bruce Wayne is in a very different place than he's been in at any prior point in his storied comic book career.

The world now knows that Bruce Wayne is the financial engine behind the Batman's war on crime. The world also knows that there are multiple Batman, including two on the "home front" and several more heroes who are fighting crime under the aegis of the new organization Batman Incorporated.

Readers will see the Bruce Wayne Batman—complete with a yellow oval around his symbolic bat emblem—in the pages of *Grant Morrison & Yanick Paquette's* ***Batman Inc.*** and in *David Finch's* ***Batman: The Dark Knight.***

Meanwhile, Dick Grayson will don the mantle of the bat—sans oval—in ***Batman & Robin*** by *Peter Tomasi & Pat Gleason* (after an interim arc by *Paul Cornell & Scott McDaniel*), ***Detective Comics*** by *Scott Snyder & Jock*, and ***Batman*** by *Tony Daniel.*

And then there are those international heroes who Bruce Wayne will recruit to be part of a global Batman network (shades of the 1950s!).

In the aftermath of ***The Return of Bruce Wayne,*** Bruce has "come to understand who he is," writer *Grant Morrison* told ***Newsarama's*** *Vaneta Rogers.* "He's not just a shell of a man. He's not just a mask or a face. He's realized that Bruce Wayne and Batman are the same. So now he's allowing Bruce Wayne's business expertise to influence Batman's crime-fighting work.

"He takes a much bigger role. You'll see Bruce Wayne as almost a Tony Stark figure, using his money in a very different way... And WayneTech will be providing a lot of new equipment for the Batman operation.

"***Batman Inc.*** is the notion of Batman taking the symbol and saying, let's form an international army or team, or police force, which is endorsed by Batman and wears Batman's symbol. It's not that they all dress like Batman or look like Batman—although some of them might do it, but they all wear the symbol. And it's almost like a badge, like the Red Cross or the police or the army. And that's what he's doing now. And the reason why he's doing it will be revealed at the end of the first season..."

Wayne's first international venture, which takes part in ***Batman Inc. #s 1 & 2,*** takes him to Japan. "We're introducing the idea of a Japanese Batman," Morrison said. "The idea came from ***Bat-Manga*** book that *Chip Kidd* did — you know, the Japanese Batman strips. And I wanted to bring that in, in the same way I've brought all these other elements in from Batman's history into the one, unfolding storyline. I kind of wanted to incorporate some of that Japanese Batman manga stuff. So this is kind of the story of that Batman, as he's recruited and begins his work.

"And we've got Catwoman in there as a guest star. It's a big kick-off for how the concept works with Batman traveling around the world to different destinations and recruiting people."

Rather than working in longer three- and four-part story arcs, Morrison is compressing the Japanese adventure in a two-part tale. "It's going be even more stripped back and pulpy and fast-moving. It's really tight. It's like reading about six issues in two. I'm very pleased with the way we've been able to cut this. Yanick's work is just so great. His work is so visually dense and so detailed that you can do a lot of tricks with it, that you couldn't do with some other artists."

This high-energy, compressed approach will continue for the foreseeable future. "We want to do very short, punchy stories... We may do some that are only one issue, and some that are three issues. And that will be the first year of the book—I call it the first season. It will be twelve issues of one- or two-part stories."

"The second storyline—and this is because *Yanick Paquette* is drawing this stuff, and he draws these fabulous macho men and beautiful women—is set in Argentina, and it brings back the Batman of Argentina from the Club of Heroes story, a guy called El Gaucho," Morrison explained.

"It's kind of a big old 'macho man' story, you know, with these two guys. Maybe Gaucho doesn't want to wear the bat-symbol. He's happy to be influenced, but he doesn't want to be taken under the wing. It's just a nice macho man story set in Argentina with a bunch of new villains, and I guess influenced by the old Kathy Kane Batwoman in a flashback."

"Beyond that, after the first year of ***Batman Inc.***, my next big storyline is going to go back to focus on Damian a little bit," Morrison continued. "In the second year of ***Batman Inc.***—which is what I'm building up to—we find out why all this recruitment is going on. I'll be bringing Damian and the whole team back together again for the big epic... And definitely, I'll get my chance to write Damian again. And that will be good."

Morrison is more than a little surprised that Damian has proven so popular with readers. "When I first introduced him, I figured I was going to kill him off at the end of that first four-part story... I thought people would hate him so much! I thought I'd do one of those classic stories where the little bad guy in the last act suddenly does a wonderful thing and sacrifices his life and saves the world and you feel sorry for him. But then I thought, 'no, this character has a lot more potential.'

"Once I'd written the first part of the original 'Batman and Son' story, where Damian's in the cave and he's such a brat and he's so unpleasant to everyone, and the fact that Batman had this boy with such hatred, I thought, 'I'm going to make everyone love this character, because I think there's some big potential here.'

"It's really worked out. He's really become quite a breakout character from the series... I think he's almost got the potential to be the Wolverine of Batman. You know... he's got that little feisty, tough guy, scrapper thing going on, but in a very different way, obviously. He's an aristocrat and an assassin."

Of course, Dick Grayson will remain a major player in the Batman drama (after all, he *is* starring in three different battitles). Morrison envisions Grayson's Batman as very different from Bruce Wayne's Batman. "The way I've been playing him is that he's the consummate superhero. You know? He's the guy who's always been a superhero and he always will be a superhero and he does it really well," Morrison explained.

"So I show him in that way. But I think what's interesting is the way he deals with Damian and the way that's helped him to define his role as Batman. You know, Bruce Wayne dealt with Damian in a very strict, parental way. And Dick Grayson tried that in the first couple issues of ***Batman & Robin*** and it didn't work very well. So what he's done is very gently guided this kid. If you look at it, it's very subtle, the way he works with him.

"Grayson got over his problems quite quickly, I think, because once he had his own Robin, he was forced to be Batman. You know? He no longer had someone to look up to. He was the one being looked up to. So I think he slipped into his role quite well."

Is that why he's staying on as Batman even after Bruce returns? "Yeah. You don't want him to lose that role when Bruce comes back. It seems such a shame to drop the Dick and Damian team, which works so well as ***Batman and Robin***. So we're letting him stay as Batman because I think he's earned it—and he does it really well."

As for Bruce himself, he's not the same man that readers have known for many years. "No one can be Batman like Bruce Wayne. No one can process that feeling of trauma in the way that he dealt with it, and the way that he turned the worst day of his life into this beautiful crime-fighting experience that saves so many other lives.

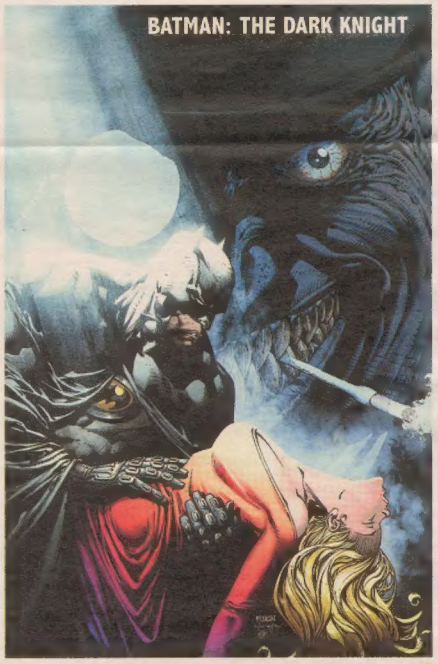
"Yes, no one else can be that man. But he's realized that other people can represent Batman... What he's trying to do now, he's realized his vulnerability, and also — as the result of ***Return of Bruce Wayne #6*** and what happened in there — he's also realized that he is kind of a living symbol. He's almost a New God himself, in the sense that Batman is bigger than Bruce.

"And he's seen that Dick and Damian have managed to keep Gotham intact while he's been gone. And suddenly it's the idea of this symbol. That's what drives him toward Batman Inc."

Morrison points out that it's not just Batman who is taking a more prominent position in the DC Universe. Bruce Wayne also "takes a much more proactive role in the idea of Batman," Morrison said. "He's much more dialed up in the mix, I guess — a *lot* more. Bruce's voice is louder in the Batman concept than it may have been in the past."

The ongoing Batman saga continues each month in ***Batman Inc., Batman: The Dark Knight, Batman, Detective Comics,*** and ***Batman & Robin,*** where Morrison and other top talents launch the next phase of Batman's crimefighting existence.

by Vaneta Rogers
(with Cliff Biggers)



Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

Produced by *Comic Shop News* in cooperation with *newsarama.com*

JMS Relocates to Earth One

Good news for fans of the hit graphic novel ***Superman: Earth One***—*J. Michael Straczynski* (along with artist *Shane Davis*) is already working on a sequel.

Bad news for fans of Straczynski's work on ***Superman*** and ***Wonder Woman:*** he's dropping both monthly titles immediately, which means that his last issues of those titles will be ***Superman #606*** and ***Wonder Woman #604.***

"I'd originally come to DC to do the Superman Earth One book which, at the time, was top secret so nobody knew about it," Straczynski said on DC's blog ***The Source,*** "and filled out on ***Brave and the Bold*** for a while to have fun and get up to speed on the DCU. When I was done with ***SEO*** I took on the ***Superman*** and ***Wonder Woman*** monthlies on the theory that I'd have time to script the full 12 issues before bounding back onto Earth One. But when the huge numbers started coming in on Earth One, and the need to fast-track the next volumes became evident in order to keep the momentum going, I knew there was no way in god's green earth that I could write that and the monthlies simultaneously. Since DC has had my notes and outlines from day one on both titles, so they're still my stories, it makes sense to let *Chris [Roberson,* who'll be writing ***Superman*** from JMS notes] and *Phil [Hester,* who'll be doing the same with ***Wonder Woman]*** keep going from the story beats I've set up. I'll dive in on occasion as needed for important story points. It's still my story, I'm involved in both books, and they're going to continue in the direction we set up. I'm looking forward to seeing what Chris and Phil have in store.

"Meanwhile, I'm taking full advantage of the situation to take a one- to five-year sabbatical from writing monthlies in order to go exclusively into writing graphic novels like ***Superman Earth One*** and ***Samaritan X,*** along with the occasional high-visibility miniseries. I think that's where the business is going, and creatively, limited series and graphic novels have always been my strong suit in that they let me tell cohesive stories with a beginning, middle and end. They can also be written and drawn before anything is ever announced or solicited, as was the case with Earth One, which has been one of the greatest and most creatively rewarding experience of my career. At some point I'm sure I'll come back to monthlies — it's just too darn much fun — but for the next one to five years, it's strictly GNs and miniseries, with ***Superman Earth One*** being the first priority, followed by ***Samaritan X.***"

Straczynski's influence will be apparent in both titles – Superman's Walk Across America will continue, the mysteries surrounding Wonder Woman will unfold each month—even though he will no longer be scripting the books.

Chris Roberson will be joined by artist *Alan Goldman* for ***Superman #707,*** with *Eddy Barrows* returning with ***Superman #708*** to complete the "Grounded" saga.

Phil Hester will work with *Don Kramer* and guest-co-penciller *Eduardo Pansica* on ***Wonder Woman #605;*** Pansica will also illustrate ***Wonder Woman #606*** before *Kramer* returns to full art duties with #607.

"We were so pleased with the response to ***Superman: Earth One,*** that it made sense to fast-track a sequel, and we definitely wanted to go back to the same amazing creative team," DC co-publisher *Dan DiDio* said. "We knew we had to make some creative adjustments to the two ongoing books Joe was involved with to ensure his stories reached their natural conclusion and to also guarantee their arrival in stores in a timely manner. We firmly believe this plan is the strongest solution—it guarantees a fitting conclusion to two of the most historic and important storylines to ever involve Superman and Wonder Woman, while locking in another epic ***Superman: Earth One*** adventure."

A Legendary Addition

Legendary Pictures—the production company responsible for such box office hits as ***The Dark Knight, 300, The Hangover, Superman Returns, Inception, Watchmen, Jonah Hex,*** and ***Clash of the Titans***—is venturing into the comics market in 2011 with the addition of a graphic novel line under the Legendary Comics banner—and the addition of veteran editor *Bob Schreck.*

Initial plans call for Legendary to release four to six graphic novels a year, beginning with a line launch in the first half of 2011. No specific projects were announced, but Schreck, who has previously worked as an editor for Dark Horse, DC, and (most recently) IDW, as well as an editor and co-founder of Oni Press. Along the way, Schreck has worked with such all-star creators as *Frank Miller, Neil Gaiman, Kevin Smith,* and *Matt Wagner,* leading some to speculate that readers can look forward to high-profile creative involvement in the Legendary Comics line.

"Bob is an iconic editor and one of most highly-regarded curators and editors of comic culture in our industry. He is the perfect leader with the right balance of passion and editorial skills to spearhead Legendary Comics," *Thomas Tull,* chairman and CEO of Legendary Pictures, said. "Legendary Comics is committed to being a new home for groundbreaking artists and the characters and stories they create, in an art form we love."

"Thomas and the Legendary team have a proven track record of cultivating talent and delivering unparalleled entertainment experiences, and I am looking forward to building Legendary Comics into a world-class label for the best writers and artists we know," said Schreck. "We have a real opportunity to deliver hard-hitting characters and exciting, innovative storylines to comic book aficionados. We are in the fortunate position of already having major support from the community and collaborations lined up with world-class creators."

Frank Miller described Schreck as "a joy to work with. He's tough but affable, mindful of the publisher's needs but a happy warrior on the side of the artist. We've worked together to mutual satisfaction for years. Legendary has proven its 'fides all over the movie industry and I expect no less from its publishing arm. With Bob, they've made the perfect choice: the man's a talent magnet."

"I'm thrilled that Legendary is going to be entering the world of comics," *Neil Gaiman* added. "I've been amazed and delighted by their respect for creators in the movie arena, and it can only be good news for the whole world of pop culture that they are going to be encouraging creators to tell unique, smart stories while creating amazing comics for them."

CSNsider

•In early 2011, Zenescope expands the ***Grimm Fairy Tales*** mythos with ***Grimm Fairy Tales: Myths & Legends,*** a new ongoing series that picks up after the events of ***Grimm Fairy Tales #50.*** Now that creatures from the realm of Myst have escaped into our world and are under the control of the evil Baba Yaga, major havoc is about to ensue. In the first arc, *Raven Gregory & David Miller* revisit the characters and story from the very first issue of ***Grimm Fairy Tales,*** bringing back the heroic Brittany from that very first issue. She's now working in a treatment center for adolescents... but something from another world is on her trail, determined to find and destroy her...

The new series is created by ***Grimm*** writers *Joe Brusha & Ralph Tedesco,* with *Raven Gregory* writing the first story arc, "Red Riding Hood," which is illustrated by *David Miller* and features cover art by such talents as *J. Scott Campbell, Eric Basaldua,* and *Mike DeBalfo.* "I can't tell you how excited I am to be apart of this," Gregory said. "Not only do we get to go back and revisit some of the series most popular characters like Red Riding Hood, but we get to explain the reasons behind why these characters were chosen by Sela in the first place."

"This series will allow us to now expand on past fairy tales we've already written in the original ***Grimm*** series and now turn them into four and five issue story arcs," Zenescope editor-in-chief *Ralph Tedesco* added. "It's going to be dark and twisted on a whole new level."

•IDW continues *Peter David's* ***Fallen Angel*** in January with the debut of ***Fallen Angel: Return of the Son,*** a four-part limited series illustrated by *J.K. Woodward.* Jude, the son of the Fallen Angel, once the greatest power in Bete Noire, now serves the needs of others while angrily remembering his glory days. But that may be about to change with the arrival of Enoch, son of Cain, who claims that he's capable of restoring Jude to his former glory. But what will be the cost to Jude... to the Fallen Angel... and to the rest of the world? (To bring readers up to speed on the ***Fallen Angel*** saga, IDW is also releasing ***Fallen Angel Omnibus Volume 2 TP,*** collecting ***Fallen Angel #s 22-33*** and

SPIDER-MAN BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER

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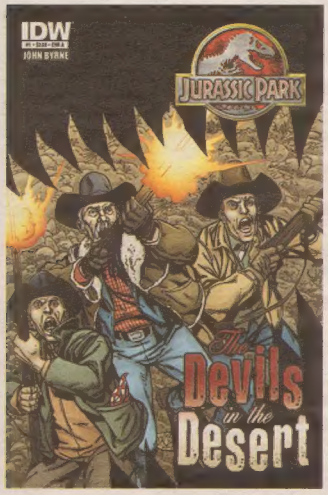
the miniseries ***Fallen Angel: Reborn,*** guest-starring Illyria from *Joss Whedon's* ***Angel.)***



•*John Byrne* makes a trip to ***Jurassic Park*** beginning in January, when he launches the four-part ***Jurassic Park: The Devils in the Desert.*** Byrne is both writer and artist of this story that begins when a sheriff is confronted with numerous cattle mutilations and the disappearance of a local farmer. The situation is about to get a *whole* lot worse, though...

•Zombie fans will find a heaping helping of undead excitement in ***Deadworld Omnibus,*** a 264-page trade paperback collecting ***Deadpool: Requiem for the World, Deadworld: Frozen Over,*** and ***Deadworld: Slaughterhouse*** by *Gary Reed, Vince Locke,* and others. Look for it in January.

•Marvel has added a blank cover variant edition of ***Wolverine: Best There Is #1*** to the schedule. Look for it on December 1st, the same day the standard edition of the *Charlie Huston-Juan Jose Ryp* issue ships.

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FEATURING JACK KIRBY STEVE DITKO ALEX TOTH BOB POWELL MILT STEIN
INTRODUCTION BY JOE KUBERT

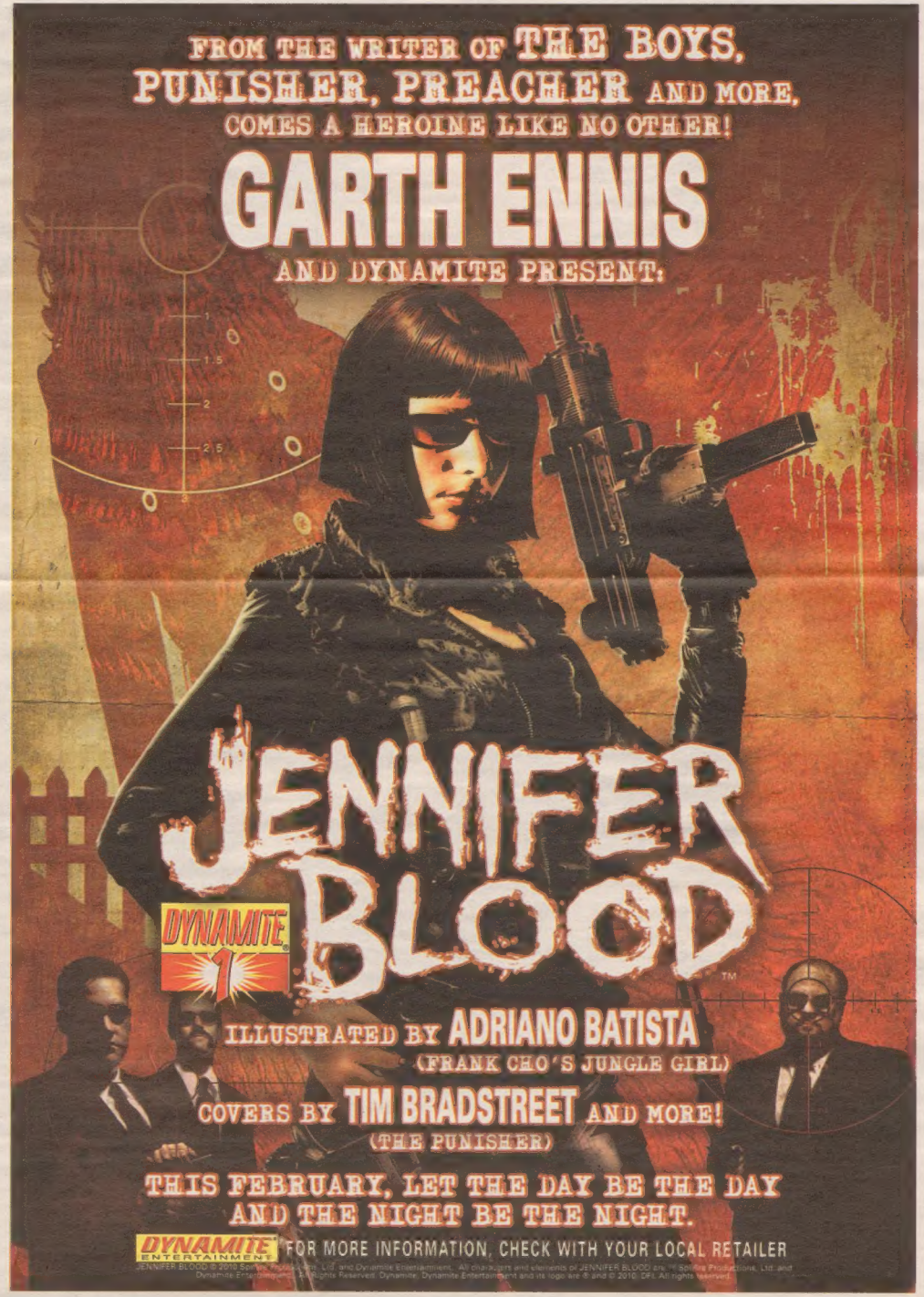
•Like a lot of depth in your comics? Then ***Amazing 3D Comics HC*** is the book for you! This 176-page hardcover, slated for January release from IDW, collects mid-1950's 3D comics featuring work by *Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, Bob Powell, Al Jaffee, Russ Heath, Milt Stein, Alex Toth,* and many more. And of course, the book—which features a special lenticular 3D cover—also includes 3D glasses so that you can fully enjoy its multi-dimensional wonders!

•And speaking of ***Wolverine: Best There Is #1,*** the previously-announced *Herb Trimpe* 1-for-15 variant has been replaced with a *Phil Jimenez* variant instead.

•Vertigo has announced the full contents for ***Fables #100.*** The 100-page issue will feature a 62-page lead story written by series creator *Bill Willingham,* with art by *Mark Buckingham, Steve Leialoha,* and *Andrew Pepoy.* In addition, it will include a ten-page prose tale by *Mark Buckingham* with illustrations by *Bill Willingham;* a do-it-yourself ***Fables*** puppet theater illustrated by Buckingham; a three-page story written by Willingham with art by *Chrissie Zullo;* a three-page story by Willingham with art by *Joao Ruas;* a two-page ***Fables*** board game designed by Willingham, with illustrations by Buckingham; and four celebrity "Burning Questions" stories, all written by Willingham with art by *Adam Hughes, J.H. Williams III,* and *Dave Johnson,* featuring questions from some of your favorite actors who are also ***Fables*** fans. Look for it in comic shops on December 8th.

•*Bill Willingham & Matt Sturges* have confirmed that they plan to end ***Jack of Fables*** in 2011 with the release of the fiftieth issue.

•DC has cancelled orders for the ***Sparta USA TP.*** There are no plans to resolicit the title.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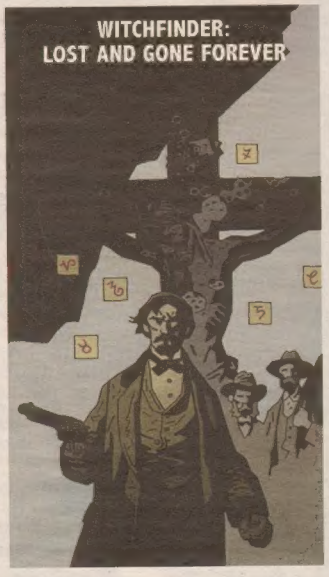
Coming Comics—Dark Horse in February

The spring, Archie Comics and Dark Horse join forces to launch ***Archie Archives.*** The first volume, a 160-page hardcover, collects the almost-impossible-to-find Archie tales from early Golden Age issues of ***Pep*** and ***Jackpot Comics,*** through ***Pep #31*** and ***Jackpot #8.***

In ***Evelyn Evelyn,*** a 160-page original hardcover graphic novel, *Amanda Palmer, Jason Webley, & Cynthia von Buhler* present "a wholly true and accurate account of the tragic events surrounding the extraordinary lives of Evelyn Evelyn, a darling but unfortunate pair of conjoined twins," as Dark Horse describes the offbeat work. The book follows the twins from their birth through their rise to international fame. ***Evelyn Evelyn,*** which is designed to coincide with the release of Palmer & Webley's musical release ***Evelyn Evelyn*** (betcha know what that's about!) is offered as a pair of hardcover volumes collected in a single slipcover (get it—two combined into one?).

In ***King Conan: The Scarlet Citadel #1,*** *Timothy Truman & Tomas Giorello* launch the first Dark Horse miniseries devoted entirely to the trials and exploits of *Robert E. Howard's* King Conan! This adaptation of Howard's "The Scarlet Citadel" takes readers many years forward in the barbarian's life to a time when he's already crowned himself ruler of Aquilonia.

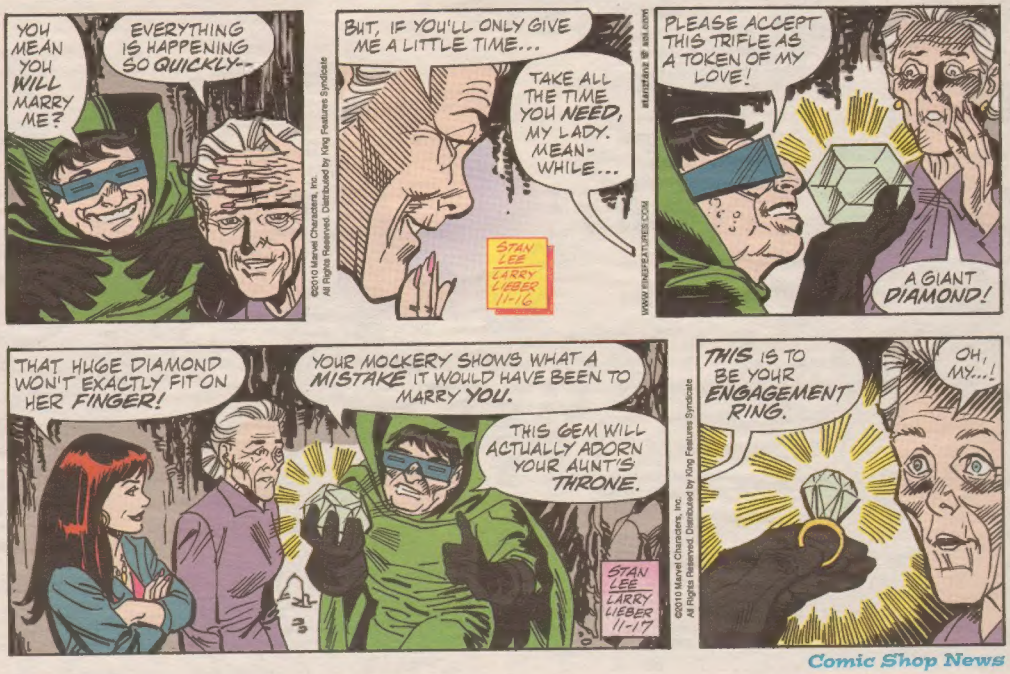
Rob Hughes, Thomas Yeates, & Michael Wm. Kaluta adapt *Edgar Rice Burroughs'* ***The Outlaw of Torn*** in the graphic novel ***The Outlaw Prince,*** offered in trade paperback and a deluxe limited hardcover edition that adds an afterword by Burroughs expert *Frank Westwood* and a cover by *Alan Lathwell.* This adventure is set during the tumultuous Second Baron's War, when a young prince is ruthlessly abducted from his royal family, taken into the rugged mountains of Derbyshire, and brainwashed to forget his very heritage. He's trained to become the greatest swordsman the world has ever known—and grows to be the most dreaded name in all of Britain.



Mike Mignola, John Arcudi, & John Severin bring back Witchfinder in the five-part limited series ***Witchfinder: Lost and Gone Forever.*** In the frontiers of the American Wild West, nineteenth-century occult investigator Edward Grey hunts down a fiendish member of the Heliopic Brotherhood of Ra. What he finds is a town harboring bloodthirsty criminals and terrible supernatural horrors!

Dark Horse collected editions (advance solicited for March and April release) include:

•***The Adventures of Dr. McNinja: Night Powers TP,*** a full-color collection of the first three story arcs—along with an exclusive-to-print new story—by *Chris Hastings, Benito Cereno, & Les McClaine.*


YOU MEAN YOU WILL MARRY ME?
EVERYTHING IS HAPPENING SO QUICKLY--
BUT, IF YOU'LL ONLY GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME...
TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED, MY LADY. MEAN-WHILE...
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 11-16
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS TRIFLE AS A TOKEN OF MY LOVE!
A GIANT DIAMOND!
THAT HUGE DIAMOND WON'T EXACTLY FIT ON HER FINGER!
YOUR MOCKERY SHOWS WHAT A MISTAKE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TO MARRY YOU.
THIS GEM WILL ACTUALLY ADORN YOUR AUNT'S THRONE.
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 11-17
THIS IS TO BE YOUR ENGAGEMENT RING.
OH, MY...!
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•***Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery Archives Volume 5 HC,*** collecting ***Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery #s 25-32.***

•***Chronicles of Conan Volume 21: Blood of the Titan & Other Stories TP,*** collecting ***Conan #s 160-167*** and ***Conan the Barbarian Annual #7,*** featuring work by *Michael Fleisher, Roy Thomas, John Buscema, Ernie Chan, Bob Camp, Gary Kwapisz,* and others.

•***Conan Volume 10: Iron Shadows in the Moon TP & HC,*** collecting *Timothy Truman & Tomas Giorello's* ***Conan the Cimmerian #s 22-25*** and ***The Weight of the Crown*** oneshot with its ***Myspace Dark Horse Presents*** short story prologue.

•***Emily the Strange Volume 3: The 13th Hour TP,*** collecting 96 pages of Emily strangeness by *Roger Reger & Buzz Parker.*

•***Flash Gordon Comic Book Archives Volume 3 HC,*** collecting ***Flash Gordon #s 12-18,*** featuring work by *Bill Pearson, Joe Gill, Pat Boyette, Jeff Jones,* and *Reed Crandall.*

•***Star Wars: Invasion Volume 2—Rescues TP,*** collecting ***Star Wars: Invasion—Rescues #s 1-6.***

•***Star Wars Omnibus: At War with the Empire Volume 1 TP,*** collecting tales of the early days of the Rebel Alliance as presented in ***Star Wars: Empire #s 1–6, #9*** (partial), ***#s 10-11, 13–14, 19–22, 24–25, and 31.***

•***Too Much Coffee Man Omnibus,*** collecting *Shannon Wheeler's* ***Too Much Coffee Man: Guide for the Perplexed, How to Be Happy, Parade of Tirade,*** and ***Amusing Musings.***

Dark Horse collectibles (advance solicited for April and May release) include:

•***Classic Archie Character #5: Reggie,*** a syroco-style sculpture limited to 550 numbered pieces and packed in its own tin box, with a pin-back button and character booklet.

•***Toy Story: Woody's Roundup #1—Woody,*** a 5" tall syroco-style statue of Woody limited to 550 numbered pieces, each packaged in its own tin box, with a pin-back button and character booklet.

Avengers Seeing Red

The Red Hulk joining the Avengers? It's true—and in fact, it's taking place in ***Avengers #7,*** in comic shops now! Recently, *Brian Bendis & Tom Brevoort* took part in a Marvel press conference to explain what led to the decision to add the Big Red One to the Avengers, and what else is coming up for Marvel's flagship superteam.

"The team needs a Hulk," Bendis asserted. "Not only do we get a Hulk, but we get a smart Hulk with legitimate issues and drama involving the other members. It just hit me how many great stories that could come out of it."

Bendis sees the Red Hulk as "a man with specific military experience, someone who's dealt with very powerful super elements in the Marvel Universe over the course of his career, so having someone like that on the team with a plan who can execute it with a high level of power sounds pretty good."

The Hulk isn't the only character moving into a starring role in the ***Avengers*** family of titles in the near future. The Hood is also getting his moment in the sun as he begins his quest for the Infinity Gems. Bendis explained that he would reveal how the Hood went from jail at the end of ***Siege*** to his new role as a potential wielder of the Infinity Gems. "Once you have power like that and you lose it," Bendis said," that's the reason for a power quest. In his time as kingpin, he amassed an insane fortune, so he's got money. He's got the wherewithal."

The Infinity Gems story will also involve the Illuminati. "One of the big promises of this storyline is that the Illuminati gets outed," Bendis said. "That will be dealt with in the storyline. I think it's one of the biggest revelations, coming out of ***Avengers Prime,*** with Steve and Tony finding a way to get along, and this happens."

As has been reported earlier, Squirrel Girl is indeed becoming the new nanny for Luke Cage and Jessica Jones' child. "We're thrilled that people are as excited as we are about it," Bendis said. "We're having a lot of fun with this behind the scenes as well. She has a history with some of the characters, so we're going to have a lot of fun with her over the course of the year... You can look forward to every dumb Squirrel Girl joke I could come up with!"

Editor *Tom Brevoort* said that readers looking for clues as to upcoming ***Avengers*** events should scrutinize the map revealed at the end of ***Avengers #5.*** "That map is absolutely littered with sign posts and portents of stories to come," Brevoort said, pointing out that one of the key elements of the upcoming Ultron storyline will be the phrase "Who Is Worthy?"

"Those three words will have a massive impact on the Marvel Universe throughout 2011," Brevoort said.

Bendis explained that the return of the Infinity Gems was something he wanted to do from the very beginning of the ***Avengers*** relaunch. "It was on my list of things to do the second everything quieted down. It's a great storyline for the Hulk to enter," Bendis said.

"It's a good reason for the Avengers to need a Hulk," Brevoort added.

From the time the Illuminati were introduced, it was clear that the group couldn't remain secret forever. "The Illuminati was right about almost everything they were trying to accomplish, but they knew that there was a price to pay for their actions. Any time someone holds a secret like this in, you know it's going to blow up in their faces," he said, "though they didn't know that there would be seventeen Avengers teams staring at them when it happens."

While the roster is relatively settled by now, Bendis indicated that there might be a few changes in the works, and that some characters might float back and forth between ***Avengers*** and ***New Avengers.*** "These people are here out of love and respect for each other more than any other team," he said. "But there will be some elements that make some people uncomfortable—not everyone is going to be thrilled with the Hulk on the team, and maybe they'll leave..."

Brevoort revealed that all-star artist *Bryan Hitch* will supply the visuals for ***Avengers #12.1,*** a "Point One" jumping-on-point issue that will also lay the groundwork for the Ultron story, which Bendis described as "exciting stuff for ***Avengers*** fans old and new."

Back to Press

•***Lady Mechanika #0 3rd Printing*** (SEP108192), in stores 12/1.

•***Superman: Earth One HC 2nd Printing*** (same code and cover as the first edition), in stores 11/24.

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MAY I PLACE THIS RING UPON YOUR FINGER, LOVELY LADY?
I'M... SORELY TEMPTED.
BUT... I STILL NEED A LITTLE MORE TIME...
...TO CONSIDER YOUR PROPOSAL.
NOW I GET IT!
MAY'S STALLING-- TO GIVE SPIDER-MAN TIME TO REACH US!
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STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 11-18

I MUST GO NOW--TO SEE THAT YOUR DINNER IS PREPARED!
IT'S GREAT THE WAY YOU'RE STALLING THE MOLE MAN--
--UNTIL SPIDER-MAN CAN COME AND SAVE US!
I'M... AFRAID YOU MISUNDERSTAND, DEAR--
I'M SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING HIS PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE!
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STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 11-19

NIGHT IN MANHATTAN...
FRED! THAT MANHOLE COVER--IT'S--
SORRY TO STARTLE YOU, LADY.
SPIDER-MAN!?
WHAT WERE YOU DOING DOWN IN THE SEWERS?
SPANG
MISTER, WHERE I'VE JUST BEEN--THE SEWERS WERE THE CEILING!
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STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 11-20

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